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DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
DIVISION OF OIL, GAS AND MINING

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June 20, 2000

CERTIFIED RETURN RECEIPT  
P 074 978 558

Douglas Nielsen  
Road Supervisor  
Duchesne County  
P.O. Box 356  
Duchesne, Utah 84021-0356

Re: Review of Notice of Intention to Commence Large Mining Operations, Duchesne County,  
Duchesne County Asphalt Mine, M/047/028, Uintah County, Utah

Dear Mr. Nielsen:

The Division has completed a review of your large mine notice submission received on April 20, 2000 regarding the Duchesne County Asphalt Mine located in Uintah County, Utah. This submission was in response to the Division's April 27, 1998 review letter, and the recent site inspection of April 13, 2000. The submission included: a cover letter, five pages of written responses formatted by rule number, a copy of the Division letter of March 15, 2000, a copy of the Division review letter of April 27, 1998 with comments in the margins, a copy of the original notice submission form with comments in the margins, and two oversize maps.

A major point of this latest information is the decision not to mine in the proposed expansion area located to the west of the existing pit. This change in plans has nullified some of the Division's previous review comments and generated some new comments. After reviewing this latest submission, the Division has the following comments which will need to be addressed before tentative approval may be granted. The comments are listed below under the applicable Minerals Rule heading. Please format your response in a similar fashion. Division comments from the previous review letter are included in this review and shown in italicized print. **Please provide a response to these latest comments by July 31, 2000.**

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Douglas Nielsen  
M/047/028  
June 20, 2000

The Division will suspend further review of this notice until your response to this letter is received. If you have any questions in this regard please contact me, or Tony Gallegos of the Minerals Staff. If you wish to arrange a meeting to discuss this review, please contact us at your earliest convenience. Thank you for your cooperation in completing this permitting action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "D. Wayne Hedberg". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

D. Wayne Hedberg  
Permit Supervisor  
Minerals Regulatory Program

jb/sm  
Attachment: Review  
O:\REVIEW\m47-28rvw2.

## REVIEW OF NOTICE OF INTENTION TO COMMENCE LARGE MINING OPERATIONS

Duchesne County  
Duchesne County Asphalt Mine  
M/047/028  
June 20, 2000

*Comments from the previous Division review letter are shown in italic print.*

### **R647-4-105 - Maps, Drawings & Photographs**

#### **105.1 Topographic base map, boundaries, pre-act disturbance**

*Please provide a version of the surface facilities map (Exhibit B map) which identifies pre-law disturbances within or adjacent to the area delineated by the bold border. Please identify any pre-law disturbances within the Exhibit B bold border where no topsoil was salvaged. Please provide the acreage for these pre-law areas. Please identify any areas where topsoil was not salvaged which are not pre-law disturbances. (AAG)*

Two new oversize maps were provided in this response, however, neither map was marked as an Exhibit. The maps do not identify pre-law disturbances where soil was, or was not salvaged. Another copy of the same map previously received as Exhibit B was included in this response. Comments in the margin of the Division's letter refer to Exhibit B as a response to comments under this heading, however no additional markings or text explanations were provided to identify pre-law disturbances, topsoil salvage areas and areas of no topsoil salvage.

Please provide a version of the Exhibit B map, or a version of one of the oversize maps which specifically identifies those site disturbances which are pre-law (created prior to 1975) where topsoil was, or was not salvaged. On this same revised map, please specifically identify those post-law disturbances (created after 1975) where topsoil was or was not salvaged.

#### **105.2 Surface facilities map**

*Exhibit B provides acreages for specific types of disturbances within the bold permit boundary. Are the unlabeled areas within the bold permit boundary considered undisturbed? What is the acreage associated with the "Previous Crushing and Stockpiling Area" shown on Exhibit B? (AAG)*

The comment in the margin refers to Exhibit B as a response to this section, however, no explanation of the unlabeled areas within the bold permit boundary was provided. No acreage for the "Previous Crushing and Stockpiling Area" as shown on the map was provided. The two new oversize maps do not identify the extent of the surface disturbances associated with the road cuts, drill pads, grubbed areas, or blazed property borders observed during the 4/13/00 site inspection. Please provide a revised version of these maps as a surface facilities map which includes a disturbed area border showing the extent of all the current site disturbances. (AG)



### **105.3 Drawings or Cross Sections (slopes, roads, pads, etc.)**

*Please provide several cross sections running east and west through the permit area which describe the configuration during active operations and also after final reclamation. One cross section should intersect the proposed mining area, present mining area, and waste material stockpile. One cross section should intersect the proposed mining area, existing roadway, material stockpile and loading area, and existing Uintah County road right-of-way. One cross section should intersect the existing roadway, proposed overburden stockpile and existing county road right-of-way.*

No cross sections through the permit area were provided. Given that no mining is proposed in the expansion area west of the current pit all the cross sections previously requested are not needed. Please provide a cross section running east-west which intersects the proposed expansion area, current pit and highwall, and waste material stockpile. Please show the current site conditions in this cross section and the proposed configuration after final reclamation. (AG)

*If not included in the cross sections requested above, please provide cross sections through the pit highwall running east and west which show the typical highwall configuration during operations and after final reclamation.*

No cross sections through the pit highwall were provided. Providing the cross section through the pit and highwall as requested in the comment above will address this comment. (AG)

*Please show any road to be constructed to access the upper area within the proposed mining extension on the surface facilities map.*

The maps provided do include roads currently accessing the upper area and this comment has been adequately addressed. (AG)

*Please provide a reclamation treatments map similar to Exhibit B which identifies areas to receive various reclamation treatments. Use cross hatching or color coding to identify the different combinations of reclamation treatments to be applied to various areas. The reclamation treatments map should also show areas which are not proposed to be reclaimed. Please note that areas which are not proposed to be reclaimed will need to be included in a variance request as described by section R647-4-112 of the Minerals Rules. (AAG)*

A reclamation treatments map has not been provided. Please provide a reclamation treatments map based on the revised surface facilities map requested above which shows the current site disturbances. (AG)

### **R647-4-106 - Operation Plan**

#### **106.2 Type of operations conducted, mining method, processing etc.**

*Please describe any proposed access road from the lower area up to the proposed mining extension. This description should include the width, length, and grade of the road. Please describe any structures, equipment, or facilities located on site which are associated with the normal mine operations. Please*



*describe the size and composition of both temporary structures (portable or skid mounted) and permanent structures (on foundations). (AAG)*

The margin comments refer to Exhibit E as a response to this section. Both of the two oversize maps show the current road configurations, however, neither one is specifically labeled as Exhibit E. These maps have addressed the comment regarding length and width of the road, however, without topographic lines the road grades cannot be determined. Please describe which map was intended as Exhibit E, and provide a description of the road grades, and any structures on the site as previously requested. (AG)

#### **106.3 Estimated acreages disturbed, reclaimed, annually.**

Although no mining is planned in the expansion area to the west of the existing pit, the current disturbance associated with the drill holes, access roads and blazed property border will need to be included as part of the disturbed acreage. Please provide an estimate of the total disturbed acreage associated with this operation. This acreage should agree with measurements taken from the revised surface facilities map requested above. In addition, please describe the appropriate reclamation tasks for the disturbances in the proposed expansion area in the reclamation plan and include the appropriate costs for these tasks in the reclamation cost estimate. (AG)

#### **106.4 Nature of materials mined, waste and estimated tonnages**

*Page five of the submission describes the estimated ore and waste rock/overburden as 30,000 CY per year. On this same page the overburden is described as 30,000 CY/yr, reject materials as 3,000 CY/yr, and the ore as 40,000 CY/yr. Please explain these conflicting figures. Please describe the mineral and chemical composition of the asphalt overburden materials. This section of the submission stated "waste rock can go from gravel size to large boulders approximately 3 inch in diameter." Was the intended size for the boulders three feet in diameter rather than three inches? (AAG)*

The decision not to mine in the proposed expansion area has negated the need for the previous Division comments under this heading. Please provide an agronomic soil analysis for the overburden or topsoil materials to be used in reclamation of the site. Please contact Lynn Kunzler here at the Division (538-5310), if you require guidelines for this soil analysis. (AG)

#### **106.6 Plan for protecting & redepositing soils**

*The plan indicates that topsoil will be salvaged and stockpiled for reclamation. Please describe how these topsoil piles will be protected from further impacts. At a minimum, they should be seeded with a cover crop and signs placed indicating they are not to be disturbed. (LK)*

This comment has been adequately addressed, by the statement that topsoil will be seeded with a cover crop and signs posted to prevent misuse. (LK)

*The submission does not describe salvage of topsoil materials in the 4.6 acre proposed mining extension area. During telephone conversations with County representatives, the Division has requested that the*

*topsoil materials in this area be salvaged and stockpiled separately from overburden material for use in reclamation. Please provide an estimate of the topsoil volume to be salvaged from this area and describe the location for stockpiling these soils. (AAG)*

This comment is no longer applicable since no mining is planned in the proposed expansion area, however, please describe how topsoil was handled during the creation of the current road, drill pads, and grubbed area disturbances in the expansion area. (AG)

#### **106.9 Location & size of ore, waste, tailings, ponds**

*Please estimate the typical volume or tonnage of ore to be stockpiled on site during operations. (AAG)*

This comment was adequately addressed by stating that approximately 50,000 tons of crushed ore will be stored on the site in April of each year. (AG)

#### **R647-4-107 - Operation Practices**

##### **107.1.15 Constructing berms, fences, etc. above highwalls**

*Please describe measures in place to prevent public access above or below the highwall during operations or explain why these measures are unnecessary. Please identify the location of locked gates, fencing, or berms on the surface facilities map. (AAG)*

This comment has been partially addressed by stating that all access roads leading to areas above the highwall will be reclaimed and access to the site is controlled by locked gates and fencing. Please describe the locations of the locked gates and show their locations on the revised surface facility map(s). (AG)

##### **107.3 Erosion control & sediment control**

Please describe any erosion or sediment control measures in place to minimize erosion or sediment from the current disturbances in the proposed expansion area, or explain why these control measures are unnecessary. (AG)

##### **107.6 Concurrent reclamation**

*What is the projected time frame for beginning the concurrent reclamation described under section R647-4-107 of the submission (i.e., how many years from now)? The Division encourages Duchesne County to perform this concurrent reclamation as soon as possible to minimize or reduce the amount of disturbed area. (AAG)*

This comment has been addressed by stating that no concurrent reclamation is planned in the current pit area, and the disturbances in the expansion area will be reclaimed and reseeded by the fall 2000. (AG)



#### **R647-4-108 - Hole Plugging Requirements**

The initial expansion proposal submitted to the Division did not include the creation of drill pads and drill holes in the expansion area immediately west of the current pit. The initial proposal did not include the creation of roads, drill pads and drill holes in the area south of the expansion area as shown on the two oversized maps received. These disturbances were created without prior approval from the Division. Please complete the enclosed exploration report form (Form MR-EPR) describing all the drilling work which was performed. All drill holes will need to be plugged according to this section of the Minerals Rules and all associated disturbances will need to be included in the reclamation plan and cost estimate. (AG)

#### **R647-4-109 - Impact Assessment**

##### **109.4 Slope stability, erosion control, air quality, safety**

*The submission states the slopes generated by this operation are stable, as they are rock. Please describe the highwalls by providing the highwall length, vertical height, bench width, and bench spacing used in the current operations and proposed for the mine expansion area. The highwall cross sectional drawings requested under R647-4-105.3 may provide some of this information. (AAG)*

Since no mining is proposed in the expansion area, this comment has been partially addressed by the statement that bench spacing will continue to be the same as currently used. Please describe the dimensions for the current bench spacing used in the pit. (AG)

#### **R647-4-110 - Reclamation Plan**

##### **110.2 Roads, highwalls, slopes, drainages, pits, etc., reclaimed**

*The submission states all roads, pits, slopes and other areas will be graded back to slope and contoured into the existing ground and covered with topsoil, scarified and reseeded. Please describe the highwall and slope configurations (angle, benching, composition, surface roughness) after final reclamation. Please describe the proposed amount of soil cover to be used in reclaiming these areas. The reclamation information provided here should agree with the graphic representations shown on the requested reclamation treatments map. (AAG)*

The highwall description and cross section requested above in sections R647-4-109.4 and R647-4-105.3, respectively, will also address the highwall comment in this section. (AG)

##### **110.3 Description of facilities to be left (post mining use)**

*Will the "Existing Uintah County Road Right-of-Way" shown on Exhibit B be reclaimed during final reclamation of this site or will it remain? If it is proposed to remain, please provide the appropriate variance request information as described under section R647-4-112. (AAG)*

This response states that this road will remain to provide continued access to private land east of the tar sand pit. Please identify the portion of the road proposed to remain for this private land access on the reclamation treatments map. (AG)

### **110.5 Revegetation planting program**

*The plan states that Division recommendations will be followed with regards to the reclamation seed mixture. Attached to this review is a copy of the recommendations made by the Division on November 29, 1995. This recommendation is still valid for your site. (LK)*

This comment is addressed by the agreement to use the recommended seed mix. (LK)

*The submission describes topsoil salvage from 3.5 acres. The reclamation section of the submission states the disturbed areas will be covered with soil at a minimum six inch depth. Will the entire disturbed area be covered with six inches of soil as part of reclamation? Will overburden materials be used as topsoil substitute material in final reclamation? If so, please provide an agronomic soil analysis of these materials. Will organic materials or fertilizers be added to this overburden material as part of final reclamation? If not, please explain why. (AAG)*

This comment has been addressed by the statements that all disturbed areas will be covered with six inches of topsoil, and that it is unknown if overburden will be used as soil substitute, if so, fertilizers (or other soil amendments) may be needed. (AG)

### **647-4-111 - Reclamation Practices**

#### **1.15 Constructing berms/fences above highwalls**

*Please describe any berms or fences proposed to protect the public from highwall hazards as part of final reclamation or explain why these measures are unnecessary. (AAG)*

The response to this comment was that the highwall is accessible only by foot, therefore, no berms or fences are planned. After reclamation of the disturbances in the expansion area, it is true that access above the highwall would only be possible on foot. If the reclaimed pit is accessible, the County will need to place additional berms or barriers at the bottom of the pit highwall to improve safety. (AG)

### **111.6 All slopes regraded to stable configuration**

*Please see comments under R647-4-109.4 regarding slope configurations. (AAG)*

The response refers to section 110.2 to address this comment, however, section 110.2 does not describe the actual slope configuration. Please describe the anticipated slope angle and length for the pit area after final reclamation. (AG)

### **111.7 Highwalls stabilized at 45 degrees or less**

*Please see comments under R647-4-109.4 regarding highwall configurations. (AAG)*